

Minutes of a meeting of the Yetholm and District Community Council, held at the Youth Hall, Town Yetholm, at 7.00pm on 30 November 2021.

Present: Shane Black (Chair), Graeme Wallace (Vice-Chair), Hywel James (Secretary), Norman Burr (Treasurer), Sumati Bala.

Ex officio: Euan Robson (SBC), Simon Mountford (SBC).

Members of the public: Kevin Lee, Euan Gibson.

Apologies: John Stobart. Sgt Granger of Police Scotland (Galashiels) had been notified that face-to-face meetings of the Community Council had resumed in October but there had been no response to date regarding attendance by a Community Police Officer.

1 Declaration of Interests: there were none.

2 Minutes of Previous Meetings: Minutes of the meetings held on 7 September and 26 October 2021 were agreed and signed as correct records.

3 Matters Arising (other than those appearing on the agenda for the current meeting):

3.1 7 September 2021. It was noted that the chevron sign warning of the bend adjacent to Catch-a-Penny cottage had been installed. A meeting to consider the siting of the bench at Town Yetholm would take place shortly. Other matters which remained to be resolved from the September meeting would be returned to at a future meeting of the Community Council.

3.2 26 October 2021. The lack of response to calls to the community to serve on the Community Council was deprecated, as was the lack of any young people. Sumati suggested the Kelso High School might be approached to discover if any young people from the village might be interested in putting their names forward. Simon observed there had been a negative response to an approach of that kind some years ago. It was noted in passing that a minimum age of 18 years would be required. (Following the meeting it was confirmed by reference to SBC Guidelines, that the minimum age for election as a full Community Councillor was 16 years). Simon also suggested that from time to time certain individuals could be co-opted to address particular subjects, an initiative which might encourage people to consider putting themselves forward in the future to serve on the YCC.

3.3 Euan stated that the public benches at Venchen and Cherrytrees were scheduled to be repaired 'in situ', and added that he would report back on progress, (ER). The matter of a third defibrillator for the village was being progressed by John, as were the arrangements for placing Christmas trees on the Greens at both Yetholms, (JS). The cost of the trees this year was raised under the Public Issues (4), and the Treasurer's Report, (both below). It was confirmed that, by arrangement with Susan Stewart, James Borin, of The Border Hotel, had volunteered to fly the flags in future for St Andrew's Day and Yetholm Festival Week 2022

an initiative for which he had been thanked by the new Secretary. In this connection it was noted that the Saltire was flying at both sites on St Andrew's Day, the date of the present meeting. The YCC's bank account handover is being progressed by Norman in liaison with Angela, (see also 6, below). In future when the YCC met at the Youth Hall the key would be collected and returned to Margaret Westwood, at 'Rubislaw', Yew Tree Road, Town Yetholm, (General).

4 Matters raised by the Public: Mr Gibson drew the meeting's attention to Minute (3.8) of the September 2020 meeting of the YCC which stated inter alia that a limit should be imposed on costs in future for the purchase of Christmas trees. It was understood that John had ordered two trees from a nursery in Stichill. Following a discussion of costs, it was agreed to leave the matter until John, who was temporarily away from Yetholm, had returned and could clarify the position, (JS).

5 Portfolio Presentations:

5.1 The Chair stated that following the recent clearing of a collapsed wall by SBC workers the operation of the drainage ditch at Halterburn was worse than ever in flooding the road. It was agreed that Euan should take the matter up with SBC, (ER). Graeme notified the meeting that repairs to the Town Yetholm noticeboard following the recent high winds were in hand. Other storm damage was reported, including the impact on trees on the two Greens. Some older trees had lost substantial branches. Simon agreed to contact the SBC Tree Officer to request an early inspection of the general condition of the trees in both Town and Kirk Yetholm, some of which were well over a century old, and to check for any potential safety issues regarding the trees arising from the weekend's high winds, (SM).

5.2 Norman drew attention to a collapsed wire fence alongside the Recreation Ground presented a hazard to walkers because lengths of it were either very low to the ground or obscured by vegetation. The fence was understood to be a responsibility of the landowner to repair, replace, or remove. The landowner (possibly James Wauchope in this instance), should have this hazard drawn to his attention. Secretary to contact Mr Wauchope, (HJ).

5.3 Graeme reported a large pothole which was located on the edge of the left hand carriageway of the road to Kelso as you immediately left Town Yetholm. This matter was noted by Euan for action by SBC. (Shortly after the meeting Euan was able to confirm that the pothole had been filled).

6 Treasurer's Report:

6.1 Norman introduced his report by thanking the outgoing Treasurer, Angela Walker, both for the comprehensive and efficient handling of the accounts, and for her generous help to him in passing across the material, (HJ to write to AW). Currently the account stood at £6510.98. There was some anticipated income, most notably a payment from SBC, which was understood to be dependent upon receiving formal assurance from the YCC that its

membership had signed up to the official Code of Conduct. Hywel tabled a document for members to sign. Euan added that he believed a formal Minute to this effect would be sufficient to have funds released by SBC, (Secretary to write to SBC).

6.2 There were a number of items of expenditure pending, including an uncashed cheque to John for £162.50; a sum of approximately £700 for defibrillators. As already noted, John would clarify the position on expenditure on lights and trees on his return, (JS). Hywel stated that the honorarium payable to the Council's Secretary could be waived during his tenure in the post, but that any expenditure on stationery would be invoiced in the approved manner.

6.3 Norman stated that the Council's bank, TSB, was very slow to make necessary modifications to both the changes to the signatories for YCC and, in particular, to a move, essential in the view of the meeting, to Internet Banking. He also advised, and the meeting approved, a move to dispense with the current petty cash arrangements. The meeting agreed that in his role as Treasurer he could use his own money to reimburse individuals' expenses and reclaim the equivalent amount from the Council's account. The Council's insurers had been notified by Norman of the change of Treasurer and associated address. Susan Stewart would pay the Zoom subscription and invoice YCC in due course, (HJ to confirm with SS). This was a precaution to ensure that if meetings were obliged to revert to videolink in future there would be no delay in moving to that format. Norman added that he had requested a meeting with Claire Maltster, the SBC finance contact for Community Councils, to seek a briefing on his role as Treasurer. Finally, he stated that the continuing matter of unwarranted claims being made by Scottish Power had not yet been resolved. He suggested simply ignoring the utility company. The meeting approved this advice.

7 Any Other Business: Graeme tabled a matter concerning revenue received from The Border Hotel and Valley Meats for the sale of tea towels, etc. Simon requested contact details of Hywel for the new YCC, (Hywel to respond to SM). Norman and Graeme had both drawn attention to a paper from Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway which was administering a new funding initiative for the south of Scotland. This move was felt to be highly worthwhile and while YCC lacked the infrastructure to bid itself, it would draw the attention of certain organisations in the area to its potential as a source of revenue.

8 Date of Next Meeting: Burns Night, 25 January 2022, at 7.00pm.

(Second draft cleared by Chair, 5 December 2021/HJ)

Shane A. Blair Chair, 29th March 2022